(c) Since Shri Mangal Singh has already taken a patent on his invention, he may get the pump manufactured by some manufacturers for commercialisation, utilising the funds available from financial Institutions/ Banks for such help.

(d) Not applicable.

Minimum procurement price

*478. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any plan for enhancement of minimum procurement price for the farmers for different commodities; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, commodity-wise?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA): (a) and (b) as per the existing price policy for agricultural commodities, the Governemnt announces each season Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for major agricultural commodities. The prices are duly fixed after taking into account the increases in the cost of cultivation over the period and other relevant factors so as to ensure remunerative prices to the farmers.

Central assistance for Damaged Coconut Plantations

*479. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State of Andhra Pradesh has requested to release Central assistance of Rs. 40 crores to provide relief for damaged coconut plantations and restore the works damaged by severe cyclonic storm on 17th October, 1999 in Srikakulam District; and

(b) if so, by when the funds for relief to farmers of Srikakulam District will be released?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Rs. 1.00 crore was released for rehabilitation of farmers of Srikakulam District. However, no funds were recommended by National Calamity Relief Committee for release under National Fund for Calamity Relief as it was considered that State Government would have managed the calamity out of the funds under Calamity Relief Fund.

Software Technology Parks in Tamilandu

*480.SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up software technology parks in Tamil Nadu during the financial year 2000-2001;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any software technology park exist in Tamil Nadu; and

(d) what steps Government will take to spread Information Technology in rural areas of the country, especially in Tamil Nadu?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) Software Technology Park has already been set up at Chennai and Coimbatore in the State of Tamilnadu.

Software Technology Park of India (STPI), Chennai will be establishing Satellite Earth Station to provide High Speed Data Connectivity at Southern Districts of Tamilnadu like Madurai and Trichy with the support of State Government.

(d) Government is providing the required policy frame work to upgrade existing STD/ISD/PCOs into Public Tele-Info Centres (PTICs). This facility would be available all over the country including rural areas of Tamilnadu. Further, Ministry of Information Technology has initiatsd a project in Ramanathapuram, District of Tamilnadu for developing a network of village Information Centres to share information on Public Health, Crop Planning, Soil Preservation and the like.